

Alabama Hiking Trail Society

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Contact: Joe Cuhaj
Tel: (251) 533-1812
Email: jcuhaj.vppublicity@hikealabama.org

DISCOVERING ALABAMA'S DOUG PHILLIPS TOPS HIKING SPEAKER LIST

Hikers from Around the Southeast Set to Converge on Cheaha

Hundreds of hikers and outdoor enthusiasts from Alabama and surrounding southeastern states will converge atop Cheaha Mountain for the 5th Annual Alabama Hiking Trail Society Conference, the largest hiking and backpacking conference in the state.

The event, scheduled for March 30th-April 1st, is sponsored by the non-profit AHTS and Cheaha State Park. The weekend will feature something for all outdoor lovers according to AHTS President, Mike Kennedy.

“The weekend will be full of fun and information for everyone who loves to get outside with nature. Whether you want to learn more about the environment, the history of the region, or get backpacking and hiking tips, Cheaha will be the place to be.”

According to Kennedy, the conference is for everyone no matter what your level of hiking or backpacking experience. Some of the guest speakers that will be featured over the weekend include hiker Nimblewill Nomad, one of the first to hike the 5,500-mile long Eastern Continental Trail from Key West, FL, through Alabama, and into Canada, Skip Essman with Leave No Trace will discuss reducing our impact on the environment, and many more.

The main event comes during the Saturday evening program when attendees will hear from the event's key note speaker, Dr. Doug Phillips.

Many people know Dr. Doug from his Emmy nominated Alabama Public Television series “Discovering Alabama”. Now in its 20th season, “Discovering Alabama” is an educational documentary series featuring the natural beauty, history, and wonders of Alabama.

What many people don't realize is that Dr. Phillips has pioneered many other important Alabama initiatives for education and conservation, including the acclaimed model school curriculum Discovering Our Heritage: Incorporating Environmental Education to Integrate the Teaching of History, Geography, Science, Mathematics, and Language Arts - A Community Collaborative Approach and the nationally-recognized model for wild land conservation, the Alabama Forever Wild Program.

Dr. Phillips holds the position of Coordinator for Environmental Information and Education with the Alabama Museum of Natural History at the University of Alabama, where he has also authored numerous publications including the national award – winning books, *Discovering Alabama Wetlands* and *Discovering Alabama Forests*.

The conference is open to everyone. Admission to the conference is \$20 which includes all presentations and events throughout the weekend. Dinner will also be served during the Saturday evening program. The price for dinner is \$18. Dinner during the Saturday evening program is optional.

All proceeds from the conference helps AHTS continue our mission of protecting maintaining, developing, and promoting hiking trails throughout the state for all to enjoy.

For more information on the conference and to register, please visit our website at www.hikealabama.org/conference07/conference.htm. For more information on the Alabama Hiking Trail Society, visit AHTS online at www.hikealabama.org.

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If you would like more information on this topic or to schedule an interview with AHTS President Mike Kennedy, please contact Joe Cuhaj at (251) 533-1812 or email Joe at jcuhaj.vppublicity@hikealabma.org.