

WASHINGTON – A bill to expand the boundaries of the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge was introduced today in the House of Representatives. If passed, this bill will increase direct protection of the banks of the main stem Cahaba River from the current 3.5 miles to approximately 8 miles.

In 2000, the Cahaba River NWR was created by legislation that Congressman Spencer Bachus introduced and passed in the United States Congress.

“This nature refuge has been a high priority of citizens of Bibb County as well as conservationists and environmentalists throughout Alabama since its inception,” Bachus said.

“This is great news. The Cahaba River Wildlife Refuge is a source of great pride to everyone in Bibb County, as well as a

great asset. Its expansion is something we're very excited about," Bibb County Probate Judge Jerry Pow said.

"When Congressman Bachus was elected to represent us, we made it known to him that this was a high priority. The refuge has a major economic impact on West Blocton, and the Congressman's support has been unwavering," West Blocton Mayor Jabo Reese said.

"Since the Cahaba River NWR was originally created, we have been continuously working to fund and expand the refuge. Through an appropriation I secured last year, we have completed purchase of the 3,500 acres originally authorized.

Today, we are taking the steps necessary to begin its expansion.

“You cannot live in a state such as Alabama and not be both awed by its natural beauty and inspired to do whatever is possible and practical to protect it. Within our beautiful state, the Cahaba River NWR is unparalleled in its beauty and diversity. This refuge is essential in safeguarding the area's pristine and fragile beauty while allowing managed access for the public. We want thousands of families, wildlife watchers, recreationists, and students to visit and enjoy this God-given legacy. I am pleased to continue working on their behalf,” Bachus said.

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As drafted in 2000 by Congressman Bachus, the legislation that created the Cahaba River NWR specifically states that no land would be taken by eminent domain, but would either be donated or purchased at fair market value.

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