

WASHINGTON-Congressman Spencer Bachus testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Conservation Wildlife and Oceans in support of his bill that would expand the 3,500 acre Cahaba River Wildlife Refuge by 30,000 additional acres. The land would be acquired from willing landowners. "The stretch of the Cahaba that this bill would protect contains over 100 endangered species", Bahcus said. "We need to preserve this natural treasure for our children and grandchildren."

The Mobile Basin, of which the Cahaba River is a part, contains more species of wildlife than any other river basin in the United States. In the past 100 years, 50% of the documented extinctions in the United States have occurred in the Mobile Basin. "The Cahaba is the only river in the Mobile Basin that has not been dredged or dammed", Bachus explained. "We need to protect the Cahaba before it is too late. The cost of doing nothing will far outweigh the cost of saving the Cahaba for future generations to enjoy."

Ninety percent of the original 3,500 acres have been acquired from willing sellers. Since the original refuge

has been created, seven new species of plants have been found in the Cahaba already. "By preserving the Cahaba we have an opportunity to not only enjoy its beauty, but there is a great opportunity to also learn from it", Bachus added. A nature center is planned for future development as well.