



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, the people of the State of Alabama treasure our wildlife and take pleasure in the natural heritage that has benefited generations of Alabamians; and

WHEREAS, the gopher tortoise is a much-beloved and iconic species of southern Alabama's natural communities and lives in twenty-six counties of the state; and

WHEREAS, the gopher tortoise is State protected in the eastern portion of its Alabama range and federally protected as threatened in Mobile, Washington and Choctaw counties; and

WHEREAS, gopher tortoises are ecologically important as a keystone species in upland habitats, providing habitat and refuge in their burrows for more than 350 communal wildlife species, including other imperiled species; and

WHEREAS, gopher tortoises help to sustain the ecology of South Alabama and provide our residents and visitors with a source of joy and appreciation for nature; and

WHEREAS, the gopher tortoise's habitat needs protection; and

WHEREAS, it is important for Alabamians to understand their role in conserving gopher tortoises; and

WHEREAS, raising awareness, through media, social media, exhibits, brochures and school and community outreach activities, increases appreciation and conservation of the species; and

WHEREAS, cooperation among many Alabama's public and private entities, including military bases and private landowners, has been vital to conserving gopher tortoises. Organizations and individuals must continue working together for the long-term survival of the gopher tortoise in its natural habitat;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim April 10, 2018, as

Alabama Gopher Tortoise Day

in the State of Alabama and urge all citizens to engage in efforts to care for and preserve this beloved species.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the City of Montgomery on the 21st day of March 2018.

Kay Ivey
Kay Ivey, Governor