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MEDIA ADVISORY

Date: Feb. 28, 2007 – Updated at 1 p.m. (CST)

U.S. Forest Service Closes Dugger Mountain Wilderness Trails Due To Wildland Fire

WHO: U.S. Forest Service, Shoal Creek District, Talladega National Forest

WHAT: The U.S. Forest Service has temporarily closed a section of the Pinhoti Trail and all trails within the Dugger Mountain Wilderness because of a wildland fire located in the Talladega National Forest, Shoal Creek Division. The Forest Service is asking motorists to limit use of Forest Service Road 500. Forest users planning to hike the Pinhoti Trail located in the Dugger Mountain Wilderness should contact the Shoal Creek District office at 256-463-2272 before leaving or check the Forest Service website at www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/alabama.

Because of the wildland fire, those living or traveling near the Dugger Mountain Wilderness Area in the Talladega National Forest will see smoke and an increase in Forest Service personnel and equipment near roads.

WHEN: Beginning today, February 28, all trails in the Dugger Mountain Wilderness area including a section of the Pinhoti Trail will be closed until further notice.

WHERE: Talladega National Forest – Shoal Creek District – Pinhoti Trail, located in the Dugger Mountain Wilderness and Forest Service Road 500.

WHY: Due to the safety concerns for forest users as a result of the wildland fire, Forest Service officials have closed all trails in the Dugger Mountain Wilderness area including a section of the Pinhoti Trail until further notice.

FIRE SITUATION: As of February 28, a wildland fire in the Dugger Mountain Wilderness Area has burned approximately 200 acres. The USDA Forest Service Coordination Center has ordered resources to support the fire suppression efforts.