

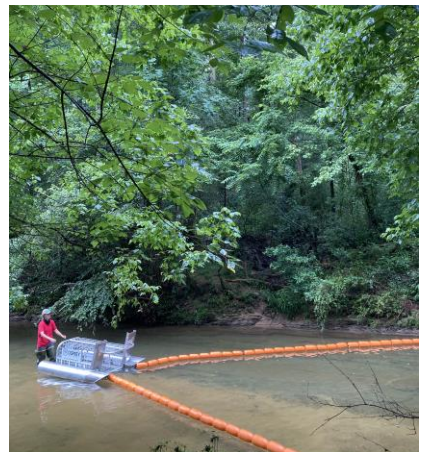
# PROJECT LITTER GITTER

## REDUCING LITTER IN CENTRAL ALABAMA'S WATERWAYS

**Freshwater Land Trust is leading a coordinated effort to reduce litter in Central Alabama's waterways by installing litter collection devices, known as litter gitters.**

In 2019, the first litter gitter was installed in Birmingham's Valley Creek. During its three-month pilot phase, the device intercepted 148 pounds of trash, 42% of which was recycled.

In 2020, Freshwater Land Trust received a \$500,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to fund six other litter gitters over three years, in addition to anti-litter programming. Partners are already planning for the future of litter gitters after the grant period ends, with a continued focus on underserved neighborhoods.



# ALABAMA'S LITTER PROBLEM

- In 2014, Alabama was ranked as the 16th dirtiest state according to the American State Litter Scorecard.
- Trash on the ground is carried by rain into roadside ditches and storm drains where it flows into and pollutes lakes, rivers, and streams.
- In 2017, Alabama's Department of Transportation (ALDOT) spent \$6.8 million to clean up trash on roadways.
- ALDOT spends \$1.9 million a year on litter pick-up across the Birmingham region.

## EPA FUNDING

Freshwater Land Trust and partners were selected to receive a \$500,000 project grant as part of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Trash-Free Waters program. This grant was one of only three awarded in Alabama.

"The EPA has over 50 partnership projects across the country as part of our Trash-Free Waters Program, which focuses on preventing trash from reaching waterways in the first place," said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

## KEY PARTNERS

Key partners include Black Warrior Riverkeeper; Cahaba Riverkeeper; Osprey Initiative; the cities of Bessemer, Birmingham, Brighton, Homewood, Trussville, and Vestavia Hills; Jefferson County Conservation District; Jefferson County Department of Health; and Village Creek Society.

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Litter Gitter focuses specifically on local creeks and rivers in Central Alabama. The goals of the project are to:

- Remove trash in or about to enter waterways
- Reduce future litter
- Educate the community about the importance of trash abatement and clean water, with a focus on students

## Install litter gitter devices

Currently, ten litter gitter devices are in the water: four in Birmingham, two in Homewood, and one each in Bessemer, Vestavia Hills, Trussville, and Brighton. Six of the ten devices are funded by the EPA. Alabama-based company Osprey Initiative installs, maintains, removes trash from, and shares data from the devices and recycles as much collected litter as possible.

## Educate students and the public

Project Litter Gitter also supports Jefferson County's Litter Quitters education program, led by the Jefferson County Conservation District. Grant funding will help build on this program's success and reach more schools and students over the next three years, as well as support new communications materials regarding the hazards of littering.



JEFFERSON  
COUNTY  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT



# HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can donate to support future litter gitter devices. Additional financial and community support for litter gitters is critical in order to combat litter effectively across our region and sustainably fund litter gitter devices. You can also become a “Litter Gitter Getter” and be listed as a project supporter on Freshwater Land Trust’s website and project materials.

[freshwaterlandtrust.org/litter-gitters](https://freshwaterlandtrust.org/litter-gitters)

## CONTACT

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