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Comments: Open Pond Blue Lake and Blue Springs were all places I spent time as a child. The diversity of wildlife and trails were like nothing else in the region, which has few wilderness recreational options, even today. This region is full of poverty-stricken families that are already burdened with pollution and a lack of open space and nature. Open Pond and Blue Lake offer respite from an increasingly hot summer, which puts lives at risk. South Alabama desperately needs more recreational options, not fewer - and not places with dangerous fumes and runoff.

Blue Springs is especially fragile due to flooding that I have witnessed firsthand. Any oil/gas leases would drain into that pristine habitat and possibly contaminate far more than what you can see on the surface. None of these areas make sense for oil/gas leases.