

Mazda and the Forever Wild Land Trust Team Up to Protect the Pygmy Sunfish

In the summer of 2019, Mazda and Toyota began construction on their [\\$1.6 billion Huntsville, Alabama manufacturing plant](#). However, whenever construction and manufacturing begin, there are typically some environmental concerns. But since the automakers listened to some important feedback from environmental experts, they found a way to break ground without breaking the local ecosystem.

For a while, construction site prep work ground to a halt as the automakers, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Tennessee Riverkeeper worked together to find a solution that would protect the habitat of the rare pygmy sunfish.

Mazda Toyota pledged \$6,000,000 towards protecting the 1-inch-long fish's habitat. This helped the Forever Wild Land Trust purchase and protect the little sunfish's habitat, now known as the Beaverdam Spring Complex.

What the experts are saying

Chris Blankenship of the Forever Wild Land Trust hopes that this deal will set a good example for other industries. "This purchase will not only protect Limestone County's rich natural resources, but our alignment with Mazda Toyota Manufacturing will show other companies that economic development and conservation can indeed go hand in hand," he stated.

Alabama Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield concurred, stating that the [Beaverdam Spring Complex](#) purchase is living proof that conservation can coexist with economic growth.

Elise Bennett, a staff attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, is also encouraged by Mazda Toyota's efforts. "The Center for Biological Diversity and Tennessee Riverkeeper are pleased to see their agreement with Mazda Toyota Manufacturing USA is yielding real conservation value for the rare spring pygmy sunfish and its freshwater habitat."

[Mazda Toyota](#) will also implement environmentally friendly practices to protect the nearby ecosystem. For instance, it won't impound or divert groundwater or surface water, or use heavy equipment in or around the ecosystem's surrounding area. Overall, the agreement will protect 1,100 acres of pristine natural habitat.