In the future, the Alabama Cultural Commons will ensure the long-term preservation of the rich natural and cultural heritage housed in the many cultural institutions across the state. The intent is to achieve the mission by overseeing the implementation of a statewide collections preservation plan, providing training opportunities and resource materials to support the preservation goal, and build public awareness about the challenges facing the cultural institutions in caring for the state’s heritage collections.

Visit www.alabamaculturalcommons.org to view credit lines for images used in these media materials.
The Alabama Cultural Commons is a resource for Alabama’s cultural heritage organizations that support collections. If you manage collections—any of Alabama’s diverse, cultural collections—you can help build a strong alliance working to develop ongoing support for collections care. Together, we can preserve our heritage for the future.

What led to this alliance?
According to A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America’s Collections, 190 million artifacts need immediate care. Alabama organizations care for significant collections, but many are at risk of damage from natural disasters and deterioration over time. Alabama collections at risk led to this alliance!

What will the alliance accomplish?
The Institute of Museum and Libraries Services (IMLS) recognized a pressing need to develop statewide plans for collections care. In 2009, IMLS awarded Alabama a grant to develop a statewide plan. The grant fosters preservation partnerships among libraries, archives, museums, and other organizations with a statewide reach. The grant enables five Alabama partners to work with organizations in our state to develop an action plan to save our collections.

Who are the grant partners?
The Alabama Department of Archives and History, the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama Museums Association, the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries, and the Society of Alabama Archivists formed a partnership to address Alabama’s pressing needs for collections care. This partnership forms the Alabama Cultural Commons.

Why is the Alabama Cultural Commons important?
It will make a positive difference in caring for Alabama’s treasured collections. This initial effort provides an opportunity for Alabama’s cultural heritage organizations to develop a statewide plan that addresses their shared preservation needs. With a strong, fact-based plan in place, we can work together to implement solutions. The Alabama Cultural Commons seeks the participation of every Alabama organization that supports collections care.

How can my organization benefit?
Look for these opportunities:
- A database of 1400 Alabama collecting organizations is available online at www.archives.alabama.gov/hrb/
- Alabama’s Connecting to Collections Heritage Health Index Survey documents collections conditions and preservation priorities. A careful analysis of the survey data enables Alabama organizations to identify common concerns. This 2010 report is available on the Alabama Cultural Commons Web site.
- Group sessions provide Alabama collecting organizations with forums that will influence future programs. Individual comments about the Alabama survey and other personal observations are important to the planning process. Comments gathered in our 2010 focus groups are posted online at www.alabamaculturalcommons.org.
- A 2010 Alabama collection preservation plan identifies needs and offers solutions that we all can implement. To obtain a copy, go to the Alabama Cultural Commons Web site.
- Workshops, such as the 2010 disaster-preparedness workshops, offer training opportunities. Look for more workshops in the future.

Please visit www.alabamaculturalcommons.org for more information.
The mission of the Alabama Cultural Commons is to identify the location and condition of Alabama’s heritage collections and develop a plan of action that meets their preservation needs.